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UNITED NATIONS
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Second Symposium on African State
Trading Organizations

Port Louis, Mauritius
23-26 October 1989

AIDE MEMOIRE
ON SYMPOSIUM ON AFRICAN STATE TRADING
ORGANIZATIONS

I. BACKGROUND

1. The second symposium on African State Trading Organizations will be held in Port Louis Mauritius from 23-26 October 1989. This symposium is a follow-up to the first symposium held in March 1987. It is taking place at a time structural adjustment programmes and the role of the public sector are high on the agenda; the deepening economic crisis and the relevance of the current structural adjustment programmes, which has prompted African countries to adopt the African Framework for Structural Adjustment Programmes (AAF-SAP) in May 1989.

2. The alternative framework calls for orderly adjustment programmes taking into account both the human dimension of development and the long term development objectives of African countries. This framework should be urgently filled taking into account sector implications of both the traditional adjustment processes and AAF-SAP in drawing up new policy directions as well as mapping out relevant plans of action. The restructuring and reform of African public enterprises in general and State Trading Organizations (ASTO's) in particular, must continue in order for such organizations to become efficient development tools. However, some of the modalities and processes of such reforms should be reviewed in the light of AAF-SAP in the context of the specific situation of African STOs.

II. OBJECTIVES OF SYMPOSIUM

3. This symposium is a follow-up to the first one held in March 1987. The purpose of this meeting is to work out relevant policy directions for the restructuring, reforming and streamlining of African State Organizations with a view to improving their management and efficiency by:

(a) reviewing existing restructuring and reform practices in order to indicate new policy directions that would enhance efficiency and entrepreneurship as priorities to be achieved in streamlining African State Trading Organizations;

(b) work out a Programme of Action for Human Resources Development for the Management and Development of African State Trading Organizations;

(c) draw up policy and operational measures for the enhancement of co-operation among African State Trading Organizations and with STOs of other regions of the World.

III. DOCUMENTS AND WORKING PAPERS

4. A number of documents on each of the main themes will be made available:

- (1) Restructuring and reform of STOs and the need for developing trading entrepreneurship;
- (2) Training needs: Perspectives of Human Resources Development;
- (3) Review of the first phase of the project PAF/88/012 on "Selective Managerial Training for the Development and Management of State Trading Organizations in Africa South of the Sahara";
- (4) Measures for enhancing co-operation among African State Trading Organizations.

IV. EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE SYMPOSIUM

5. The meeting is expected to:

- (a) make proposals for policy directions and a planning framework for the streamlining of African STOs;
- (b) prepare a Follow-up Plan of Action on Human Resources Development and Management Consultancy for African STOs; and
- (c) formulate recommendations and indicate appropriate mechanisms for the enhancement of cooperation between African STOs as well as concrete trading prospects at the intra-African level.

V. PARTICIPATION

6. Participants are invited from all African countries (each country may be represented by executives of one State Trading Organizations or more) - government representatives might participate as observers.

VI. COST OF PARTICIPATION

7. The cost of participation at the symposium, including travel and daily subsistence allowance, will be borne by each participating organization.

VII. DATE AND VENUE OF THE MEETING

8. The meeting will take place from 23 to 26 October 1989 in Port Louis, Mauritius.